DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 342 954 CE 060 542

AUTHOR Fox, John; Powell, Jan
TITLE A Literate World.
INSTITUTION International Bureau of Education, Geneva (Switzerland).
REPORT NO ISBN-92-3-102768-9
PUB DATE 91
NOTE 33p.; Photographs will not reproduce well.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; *Adult Literacy; Curriculum Development; Definitions; Developed Nations; *Developing Nations; *Disadvantaged; Educational Finance; Educational Planning; Educational Research; Elementary Education; Foreign Countries; *Literacy Education; Primary Education; Research Needs; Student Motivation; Teacher Education; *Teaching Methods; Womens Education

ABSTRACT

This booklet is based on information shared at the 42nd session of the International Conference on Education held in Geneva, Switzerland, in September 1990. Sources include speeches, working documents, final reports, questionnaire replies, national reports, and other publications produced especially for the meetings. The booklet was produced as a follow-up activity to the World Conference on Education for All held in March 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand. Articles in the publication include the following: "Illiteracy: The Problem"; "What Is Literacy?"; "Reaching the Underprivileged"; "Helping Women and Girls"; "How to Motivate Learners"; "Organizing and Planning"; "Partnerships for Literacy"; "A Glossary of Literacy Terms"; "A Question of Cost"; "What to Teach and How to Teach It"; "Questions of Culture and Language"; "Teaching the Teachers"; "Literacy and After"; "Evaluation and Research"; "Where to Go for Help"; and "International Cooperation and Aid." (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED342954

UNESCO

A LITERATE WORLD

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

F Zanuttini

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF EDUCATION

This publication has been produced by the International Bureau of Education. It is part of the follow-up activities to the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA, see below) held in March 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand.
The text is based mainly on information available at the forty-second session of the International Conference on Education held in Geneva, Switzerland, in September 1990 (ICE, also see below). Sources include speeches, working documents, final reports, questionnaire replies, national reports and other publications produced especially for the meetings. A full list of the published documents used is included on page 31.
This publication is available in English, French and Spanish. It may be freely reproduced and translated into other languages.
The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the UNESCO Secretariat concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitations of its frontiers or boundaries.

Written by John Fox and Jan Powell
UNESCO: International Bureau of Education, P.O. Box 199, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.
ISBN: 92-3-102768-9
Printing films by Pictes, Geneva, Switzerland.
Printed by UNESCO Workshop, Paris, France.

WCEFA & ICE

During 1990, which was proclaimed 'International Literacy Year' by the United Nations, two large international conferences were held in an attempt to launch new initiatives against illiteracy.

The first conference was called the *World Conference on Education for All* (WCEFA) and took place from 5 to 9 March 1990 at Jomtien in Thailand. Sponsored by UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF and the World Bank (see page 30 for an explanation of these names), it brought together over 1,500 delegates to discuss *basic learning needs for all people. The Declaration and Framework for action* adopted by this conference are available from: ED/BAS, UNESCO, 7, place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris, France.

The second conference was the forty-second session of the *International Conference on Education* (ICE), organized from 3 to 8 September 1990 by the International Bureau of Education in Geneva, Switzerland. The subject of discussion was 'literacy'. The *Final report* of this conference is available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish from: Studies Unit, International Bureau of Education, P.O. Box 199, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.

We view basic education for all as an issue of survival or death. Either we win this war or we perish.
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

3

Contents

ILLITERACY: THE PROBLEM
page 4

WHAT IS LITERACY?
page 6

UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION
page 7

HOW TO TACKLE ILLITERACY
page 8

REACHING THE UNDERPRIVILEGED
page 10

HELPING WOMEN AND GIRLS
page 11

HOW TO MOTIVATE LEARNERS
page 12

ORGANIZING AND PLANNING
page 14

PARTNERSHIPS FOR LITERACY
page 15

A GLOSSARY OF LITERACY TERMS
page 16

A QUESTION OF COST
page 18

WHAT TO TEACH AND HOW TO TEACH IT
page 20

QUESTIONS OF CULTURE AND LANGUAGE
page 23

TEACHING THE TEACHERS
page 24

LITERACY AND AFTER
page 27

EVALUATION AND RESEARCH
page 28

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP
page 30

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION AND AID
page 31

In Tunisia, an old man reads the Koran

Foreword

Illiteracy and poverty go together.

It is perfectly possible that many of those unable to read and write do not connect illiteracy with poverty. For them the real problem is the daily struggle to survive: the want of food, water, health services, decent housing and employment. They are concerned about the future of their children, for whom they hope – without much confidence – that life will be better.

Despair and submission in the face of unemployment and oppressive social structures explain their lack of interest in reading and writing. There is no point in teaching them to read and write unless they are given the hope of a better life.

The delegates who met and spoke at recent world conferences on literacy understood the link between poverty and illiteracy. They also saw literacy as a part – an important part – of the way to a better quality of life. Literacy lies at the heart of moves to reduce the unfair distribution of wealth, exploitation of the poor and their exclusion from society.

Yet a conference runs the great risk of producing merely words. One delegate therefore asked for the results to be made available 'in an easily readable form to people for whom literacy really matters'.

This booklet came about in response to that request. It begins by reviewing the problems affecting literacy education, and goes on to present some of the solutions being applied by people with a will to tackle illiteracy. Literacy during childhood and literacy during adulthood are both covered. Inserted in the text are phrases drawn from the speeches made by Ministers of Education and senior education officials at the forty-second session of the International Conference on Education held in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1990.

Simple truths are sometimes less than the whole truth, and this booklet has deliberately set out to simplify. It attempts to communicate the main purposes and ideas, but is not necessarily a statement with which specialists might agree.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Illiteracy: the problem

Everyone has the right to education, or so it says in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed by the United Nations in December 1948. But by the year 2000 there will probably still be twenty-one African countries where 40% of the population cannot read. The problem is by no means confined to Africa. Illiteracy still exists in both Asia and Latin America. On average, two out of every three illiterates are women.

Illiteracy is not simply a question of reading and writing. For young people in Third World* countries, the real-life problems are about survival. A man who is illiterate cannot participate fully in social and economic life. He is likely to be less healthy, poorer and die sooner than his literate brother.

Poor societies are usually less literate societies. Many developing countries are poverty-stricken through adverse terms of world trade for their products and heavy interest repayments on money borrowed from abroad. When governments are short of cash, schools and teachers do not get priority. In extreme cases, the education system is threatened with collapse. Developing countries should re-examine their priorities, particularly with regard to defense expenditure.

International measures are needed to reduce the amount of money flowing out of low-income countries and restore their trade balances so that they can rebuild their economies. Only then can the necessary human and financial resources be released to make their people literate.

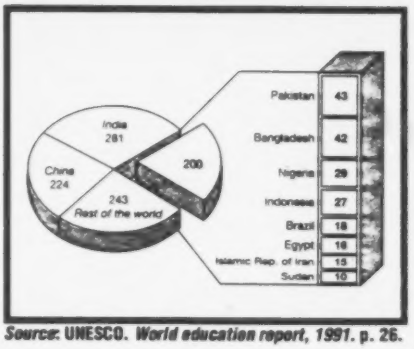
Children without schools

At present, according to UNESCO statistics, the world numbers approximately 950 million men and women who do not possess the most elementary tools to assume their own development: reading and writing. Another appalling figure: more than 135 million children do not go to school. More than 60% of these children are girls.

As the world's population grows - which is the case at present and is likely to continue for the next fifty years - developing countries will have more and more difficulty building enough schools for their children.

In many Third World countries the rural population is greater than that in towns, so that the problem is often

FIGURE 1. The ten countries with the largest number of illiterate adults in 1990 (figures in millions)



Source: **UNESCO. *World education report, 1991.* p. 26.**

TABLE 1. Adult literacy rates by sex, 1990 (percentages)[1]

	Both sexes	Males	Females
WORLD TOTAL	73.5	80.6	66.4
Developing countries of which:	65.1	74.9	55.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	47.3	59.0	36.1
Arab States	51.3	64.3	38.0
Latin America/ Caribbean	84.7	86.4	83.0
Eastern Asia	76.2	85.7	66.4
Southern Asia	46.1	59.1	32.2
Least-developed countries	39.6	51.4	27.9
Developed countries	96.7	97.4	96.1
BY CONTINENT			
Africa	49.9	61.7	38.5
America	90.0	90.8	89.2
Asia	66.5	76.6	56.0
Europe/USSR	96.9	97.7	91.1
Oceania	92.5	93.9	91.1

[1] The percentage of literate adults in the population aged 15 years and over.

Source: **UNESCO. *World education report*, 1991. p. 26.**

** = Underlined words are explained in the Glossary on pages 16 and 17.*

WHY CHILDREN DROP OUT OF SCHOOL
- ***Poverty:*** **parents are forced to make their children work.**
- **Parents do not see the point of sending their children to school.**
- **Children (or their parents) realize they are not going to learn anything that will help them in their daily lives.**
- **Education is out of touch with the reality of everyday life.**

WHY ADULTS DO NOT ATTEND LITERACY CLASSES
- ***Poverty:*** **the need to work leaves no time for literacy classes.**
- **Lack of self-confidence.**
- **Disappointment with what is taught.**
- **Frustration and discouragement at slow progress.**
- **Lack of concern and commitment by the government.**

Reducing drop-out in our education system has become an absolute obsession. **SPAIN**

During the 1980s free school textbooks were provided for all pupils prior to the General Certificate of Education, together with subsidized transport and financial assistance to poor but bright students. Since 1989 a free mid-day meal has been served to all school-children. The present enrolment rate is around 95% for year one of primary education, but dropping out is still a problem. **SRI LANKA**

We can report continuing illiteracy and even a certain amount of relapse into illiteracy. Literacy lessons and methods for adults are direct copies of the methods used in schools and are totally unsuited to the real needs of adults. This leads to a loss of interest and dropping out. **GABON**

KEEPING CHILDREN IN SCHOOL
Wastage can be cut down by:
- **insisting upon attendance at school for all boys and girls by law;**
- **proper supervision and guidance of schools, teachers and pupils by education officials;**
- **automatic promotion from one school year to the next during the primary years;**
- **The provision of school;**
- **more relevant teaching methods and materials;**
- **continuous evaluation of what pupils have learned.**
- **making what is taught more relevant to people's lives by involving parents and the local community in the school's activities;**
- **better teacher training;**
- **more female teachers;**
- **free or subsidized school books and materials;**
- **the provision of school meals;**
- **the provision of transport to and from school for those who live at a distance.**

worst in rural areas. This makes it particularly difficult for teachers from the cities, where there are usually more educated people, to reduce illiteracy among rural dwellers. But the situation may not be much better in towns. Steady migration from the countryside leads to overcrowding and poor quality education in city schools, particularly in the poor suburbs. In industrialized countries it is often the urban poor who make up the largest part of the illiterate population.

Dropping out of school

Even where schools do exist, the road to literacy is not smooth. Experts believe that, in order to master reading and writing, a child must attend primary school regularly for at least five years. Yet, in many parts of the world today primary education is affected by school failure - children dropping out of school early with dramatic consequences both for the children concerned and in terms of cost for the community.

Children who drop out of school after one or two years will not have mastered reading and writing. Most of them will become adult illiterates. Other children who repeat primary classes may not succeed in learning to read either, but they take up a place each year (due to repetition they stay in school more years than is normal) and keep other children out of school. For poor countries repetition and drop out are disastrous: wasted hours of teaching for the teacher; wasted school space for the community.

Education costs more and its effects are less beneficial. Wastage is one of the most serious and widespread problems affecting primary education today.

The provision of school transport

What is literacy?

An illiterate is a person who cannot, with understanding, both read and write a short, simple statement on his everyday life. UNESCO

At its most basic, literacy means being able to read, write and count. But it's not as simple as that. In certain societies, it has often meant being able to read and learn sacred texts. Nowadays, it is frequently understood as what has been learned at the end of primary education. While schooling may be the primary factor in learning to read, it is certainly not the only one.

Our understanding of literacy has progressed since the Brazilian educator, *Paolo Freire* (top right), published his ideas in the 1970s. For Freire, literacy is part of the process by which illiterate people become aware of their personal situation - and learn to do something about improving it. Learning to read, write and count are steps towards achieving political, economic, cultural and human rights. This, in turn, enables people who learn to read to play a role in making their world a better place to live. Although literacy may not be the great panacea that leads to happiness and wealth, it could lead to a change in the way power is distributed in society.

Functional illiteracy

Illiteracy is closely associated with poverty, and poverty is the major obstacle in the developing world. Most people in industrialized countries have learned to read and write. However, during the 1980s, governments in industrialized countries became aware that a large number of people cannot read and write well enough to cope with living in the modern world. Modern literacy is concerned with the practical application of reading and writing in daily life - with functionality. These people are therefore known as functional illiterates.

A functional illiterate is a person who has been to school and may have learned a little, but has never mastered the use of reading, writing and arithmetic in daily life. When it comes to earning a living, such people often live on the fringes of the community, and so run a high risk of unemployment. This increases their chances of poverty, slum dwelling and disease.

Functional literacy is a matter of growing concern in a world where technological progress demands ever higher levels of skill. Special measures are required to deal with this problem which also depends on skills learned outside the school - informal education.

A functional illiterate is a person who cannot engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his group and community, and also for enabling him to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his own and the community's development. **UNESCO**

... in a world where technological progress demands ever higher levels of skill.

Many people in my country have been shocked by the extent of functional illiteracy. **AUSTRALIA**

FUNCTIONAL ILLITERACY

What makes it so hard to deal with functional illiteracy?

- **adult illiterates do not like to admit that they have a problem;**
- **they do not take any interest in their own education.**
- **they are quickly bored by teaching methods designed for young children which results in drop out and wastage.**
- **lack of follow-up activities and classes leads to *relapse*; they forget what they have learned.**

Universal primary education

Where schools do exist, they may be too small . . .

We have paid special attention to the universalizing of primary education and adopted various methods to stop pupils dropping out. **CHINA**

We are doing our utmost to achieve the objective that all those pupils admitted to the first grade of the system reach the last grade in the allotted time-span. **VENEZUELA**

The concept of quality can be defined by comparing the results obtained with the objective sought: the extent to which a process of self-sustaining self-education has been initiated: the amount of relevant and useful knowledge, values, attitudes and skills acquired: the availability of equal and equitable services: efficiency, measured by comparing the level of achievement with the rational and effective use of resources. **MEXICO**

Pupils in basic education receive supplementary programmes providing teaching materials, libraries, transport, meals and health services, and the conditions are thereby created to retain them in school and to promote their learning. **BRAZIL**

In some parts of the world, children do not have a choice – there is no school for them to attend. Where schools do exist, they may be too small, too far away, too expensive . . . the list goes on. Today's children without schools become tomorrow's illiterate adults. The first line of attack on illiteracy is to provide good quality primary education for every boy and girl. Several countries have set the year 2000 as a realistic date to achieve this target.

Enrolling all children in school is not just a game of numbers. What is taught should be well taught. Actual learning is more important than the number of pupils enrolled. The *quality* of education can be determined in several ways. Can what has been learned be used in daily life? Are the teaching materials *relevant*? Have the teachers and other educational staff – planners, managers, curriculum writers, teachers, researchers and inspectors – been trained? If not, primary education will suffer.

The struggle against illiteracy is also a struggle for *fairness*. The primary school must introduce the ideas of equality, freedom, democracy and social justice.

On a practical level, money spent on primary education must be used efficiently. It is up to governments to devise policies which improve the *relevance*, *quality*, *fairness* and *efficiency* of primary education.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

How to tackle illiteracy

To attack illiteracy *now*, we need to provide learning opportunities for both young children and adults. There are already, for whatever reason, many young people and adults who do not know how to read. We must also assume that there will always be some children who miss out on schooling and grow up illiterate or functionally illiterate. For these reasons, a 'two-track approach' is required:

- pre-primary education and primary formal education to enrol children in school;
- non-formal education for illiterate young people and adults.

How do we do this?

There are no quick solutions. The way forward requires effort on three fronts: universal primary education; attempts to eradicate adult illiteracy through literacy campaigns and non-formal education; and the creation of a 'literate environment'. Attention must be paid to all three at the same time.

Providing universal primary education is a long-term solution involving everyone in national development. Non-formal education for out-of-school youth and adults will give them a second chance to educate themselves. But, this approach does not stop there. Lifelong education will allow people to learn throughout their lives for their personal, social and economic well-being.

Countries may be faced with a dilemma: do you make general literacy programmes available to all potential learners, or do you design special programmes for specific target groups?

Small-scale literacy programmes, based on the daily lives of each target group, are the most suitable approach when dealing with a diversity of learners. The learners themselves should be involved in identifying what their basic learning needs are, which may be neither as easy nor as obvious as it seems. However, involving learners right from the start will strengthen their desire to participate.

Of course, to conduct these programmes, literacy agents devoted to the cause of wiping out illiteracy are essential.

Running a campaign

Short, sharp literacy campaigns are effective in making quick offensives on illiteracy, but they need to be followed up by post-literacy activities. To launch a literacy campaign you must mobilize public opinion. Many illiterate adults may not be aware that programmes exist for them. They must be attracted to literacy centres by the efforts of newspapers, magazines, films, radio, theatre and television.

LITERACY CAMPAIGNS

A literacy campaign is a concentrated and organized effort to reduce illiteracy by mobilizing the population over a fixed period of time. Literacy campaigns can be conducted in either of two ways: through regular courses or through a special campaign. Both approaches have been used successfully in developing countries. There are several vital characteristics for success:

- **The media should raise public awareness and motivate the illiterate population to take part.**
- **Preliminary studies should identify *the real needs* of the illiterates.**
- **The government should adopt *a clear policy* and express *a firm political will* to support the campaign continuously.**
- ***All ministries, and governmental and non-governmental organizations* should be actively involved.**
- **Precise *strategies* should be laid down for each group of learners.**
- ***Curricula* should be varied for each group of learners.**
- ***Literacy agents* should be well-trained, well-motivated and well-paid.**

While educating children is an essential investment for the country's future, adult education is equally important for the empowerment of today's active participants to change the present for a better future.
KENYA

By the year 2000, in spite of a number of measures which are being taken to influence birth rates, the population is expected to increase and there will be 12 million more people aged 10 and above than we have today. Hence the importance of a continuing two-pronged attack: one on adult illiteracy; the other to universalize the first stage of formal education.
ETHIOPIA

Well-known personalities from the world of entertainment and sport can speak in its favour

...which may be neither as easy nor as obvious as it seems

If political leaders and well-known personalities from the worlds of entertainment and sport can speak in its favour, then so much the better. The literacy drive can form part of local ceremonies, fairs and festivals. Modern techniques, such as posters, badges and printed T-shirts, can also arouse interest.

Working together

The success of a literacy campaign depends on the commitment of the government. The political will of the government and the social will of the people must be harnessed together in order to find the money and the resources. Inevitably, political instability has a negative effect.

To achieve literacy throughout a country, an independent national literacy council is often set up, drawing its members from dynamic people in other ministries and in society's voluntary institutions (page 15).

The ideal being sought is that individuals feel that they can contribute to the common interest. Making primary education obligatory by law for all boys and girls is part of this ideal.

Indonesia promulgated a law wherein it is clearly stated that, firstly, there are two streams or channels of education, i.e. in-school and out-of-school education; secondly, there is free movement from in-school to out-of-school education programmes and vice versa; and thirdly, education is a lifelong process. **INDONESIA**

People's awareness of illiteracy has been raised through the meetings of various administrative and political authorities, and through participation in political, musical and theatrical events. Various religious confessions, non-governmental organizations and young people's associations and groups have added their efforts to the struggle against this scourge. **RWANDA**

The traditional leaders and chiefs should be properly involved in literacy work. **SWAZILAND**

The ministry has been mounting increased publicity using the mass media, ministerial bulletins, and other popular local magazines. The national broadcasting service is actively assisting by publicizing all literacy related functions. **ZIMBABWE**

I wish to urge for a renewal of the political will. In fact, it will have to be renewed continually until universalization of basic education becomes a reality for all. **THAILAND**

In order to promote better co-ordination in the activities of various government departments, a National Council of Popular Education will enable interministerial adult education and literacy programmes to be prepared. **GABON**

Inevitably, political instability has a negative effect.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Reaching the underprivileged

The illiteracy problem is mainly a rural problem where literacy has very little function in people's daily lives.
TURKEY

The Federal Government established the National Commission for Nomadic Education. The Commission has three Nomadic Education Centres based in universities.
NIGERIA

The government has also decided to assume greater responsibility for the education of the disabled and disadvantaged by building annexes to ordinary schools to cater for such groups without isolating them from other children.
UGANDA

Marginal groups often keep their children away from school through poverty. Some children must work to supplement the family income, while others stay at home to attend to household duties or to look after younger siblings when the parents are away. In order to meet the needs of these groups, non-formal' education is provided in 'literacy centres', in schools, temples and community centres. Flexible timetabling enables those who cannot go to school to attend classes.
SRI LANKA

The 'Diama' system to combat educational wastage consists of providing four years of schooling to children aged 10 to 13 who either did not go to school or dropped out prematurely. It provides a flexible system enabling pupils to carry out productive activities and to re-enter the formal system after passing examinations.
GUINEA

HELPING DISADVANTAGED GROUPS
There is no alternative except to spend more money on education for disadvantaged groups. Once money has been allocated, help can be given in many practical ways:
- **Give special help to *women and girls* (see opposite);**
- **Expand *pre-primary education*, combined with activities involving the family and the community. This tackles the problem at its root.**
- **Give priority for new buildings to *areas without schools*.**
- **Provide education which is flexible and designed specifically for *each group* – with the participation of that group. This means that their needs must first be studied.**
- **Give children from *poor families* opportunities to attend primary school regularly (see page 5). These methods are effective – but expensive.**
- **When it is impossible for children to attend school for social, economic or family reasons, *non-formal education* can be provided (see page 22).**
- **The education of *nomads* and other itinerant populations is a major problem. More teachers need to be trained from among the nomads themselves.**

The biggest single factor determining whether or not you are likely to be illiterate is income. Illiteracy reflects poverty; each is at once the cause and product of the other. It's a vicious circle.

A wide variety of people are involved: the rural poor, the unemployed, the physically and mentally disabled, nomads, migrants, refugees, street children, prisoners, ethnic minorities and aboriginal peoples.

Someone who fails at school is often condemned to a life of poverty, with an increased chance of malnutrition, disease, slum-dwelling, child labour and drug abuse. The illiterate becomes an outcast living in the Fourth World. Beyond the personal suffering, not knowing how to read, write and count reduces worker productivity, disturbs the running of numerous public and commercial services, and makes it difficult to create stable political structures based on agreement and participation – the very foundations of democracy.

On the other hand, research shows that there is a connection between literacy, social development, greater productivity and prosperity, although change does not come about directly but rather through a gradual process of economic and social progress. It is also thought by some experts that literacy leads to greater participation in social and cultural activities, and to the full enjoyment of civic rights and responsibilities. Where the experts are completely in agreement is that literacy leads to better health and hygiene, lower infant mortality and better child care.

One way of reaching out to disadvantaged groups is to provide them with programmes designed specifically for them. However, in practice, educational measures to help the under-privileged often fail. They fail for many reasons, but particularly because of the harsh conditions under which they live, their lack of time and their lack of motivation.

So what can be done about it? Clearly, since illiteracy and poverty are so closely connected, it's no use tackling one without the other. Attempts to involve the poor in education must be matched with attempts to improve their social and economic situation. They must be given hope. Only then will they see the point of learning.

11

Helping women and girls

As far as literacy is concerned, women are particularly underprivileged. In Africa and Southern and Eastern Asia, the literacy rate for females is on average 20% below that for men. In five of the least advanced countries, 90% of women cannot read and write.

Girls are often not considered equal to boys and do not get the same education. The reasons for this situation are complex–cultural, economic and political. The content of education often forces women into traditional female roles. Furthermore, women who missed out on primary education may find it difficult to attend adult literacy classes because of their family commitments.

It is vital, however, to involve women since both as learners and as trainers they are particularly well motivated. Their role in educating the next generation is central – a mother who can read is more likely to have children who can read.

Literate mothers have healthier children and can help society to develop in other ways, such as improved child-care and community services. The success of family planning campaigns is closely linked to the number of women who have completed primary education, and even more so secondary education. In fact, women's role in society is so important that delegates at the Geneva conference on literacy said that nothing short of absolute priority for them would do!

Changing the status of women, however, depends on changing the attitude of men, particularly in their role as fathers and husbands. Here, there was one sign for optimism: the higher the literacy rate among men, the higher the literacy rate among women.

In some countries, high-level national commissions have been formed to make sure that women's education gets the attention it needs. Elsewhere, special programmes have mobilized educated women in the community to help other women become literate. This kind of positive action helps women to gain imagination, courage and confidence in themselves, so that they can understand the causes of injustice and find the strength to change their way of life.

WHAT STOPS WOMEN LEARNING?

Women often face practical barriers to their participation in literacy programmes, such as:

- **hostile family or community attitudes;**
- **local traditions and ancestral customs about their role in society;**
- **lack of time after family and household commitments;**
- **frequent pregnancies;**
- **irrelevant literacy programmes;**
- **lack of child-care facilities.**

Laws have been enacted to deal with such issues as the withdrawal of young girls from school for early marriage. **NIGERIA**

The Female Teacher Training Project was introduced to produce trained female teachers with the assumption that they would act as change-agents to motivate rural people to enrol their children in school. **NEPAL**

Parents are less resistant about sending girls to school if there are women teachers. **INDIA**

HELPING GIRLS SUCCEED AT SCHOOL

- **Change attitudes in communities where (male) cultural traditions do not allow girls to go to school.**
- **Increase the number of female teachers by encouraging rural women to follow teaching careers by relaxing the qualifications for their recruitment.**
- **Run special condensed in-service courses for female teachers.**
- **Provide residential accommodation for female teachers.**
- **Stop girls being removed from school for early marriage.**
- **Set targets for increasing the number of girls enrolled in education.**
- **Provide child-care services so as to free young girls from looking after their younger brothers and sisters.**

MEASURES IN FAVOUR OF WOMEN

- **Choose reading materials dealing with subjects of interest to female learners;**
- **Let illiterate women choose their own teachers;**
- **Provide child-care facilities;**
- **Run courses at times when women with young children are free to attend;**
- **Include course material emphasizing that men and women are equal;**
- **Form national commissions to concentrate on women's education;**
- **Recruit educated women as literacy volunteers.**
- **In *post-literacy activities*, women should be encouraged to set up their own co-operatives and income-generating projects, particularly those saving them time and energy for other purposes.**

How to motivate learners

Many rural communities did not have schools. In many cases they have built them with local materials using their own hands, including contracting a teacher to take care of the children for the first few years. **ECUADOR**

Programmes must provide motivation and incentives for those of our people suffering literacy deficiencies - be they still at school, unemployed or even in the workforce. This might well require families and others with whom our illiterate population come into regular contact also to be motivated to support and encourage their participation. **AUSTRALIA**

We have applied the principle of the link between study and work - not only in one region, not only in one model school, but across the nation and throughout the education system. **CUBA**

In recent years, many kinds of literacy courses, combining education with practical skills and production techniques, have been organized around such activities as sewing, weaving, knitting, poultry and fish farming, woman and child care, etc. As a result, the motivation of learners has been increased. **CHINA**

The path we are taking involves the active participation of the whole of society in the common task of finding solutions which will overcome our present difficulties, with the aim of achieving a more just society. **BRAZIL**

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
Getting the local community involved and motivated is vital.
- **Encourage a local literacy committee to monitor progress.**
- **Use unexploited resources within the local community (such as the educated unemployed) as voluntary literacy teachers.**
- **Encourage local people to build a school or literacy centre using their own labour and cheap local materials.**
- **Build on a feeling of solidarity brought about by a successful literacy campaign.**

Literacy programmes fail when the local community refuses to co-operate.

The achievement of integrated rural development, the real purpose of a true community school, will only happen if there is a way for the teacher to participate with the whole community in which the school is located. The support of local associations and parents is particularly vital. **BURUNDI**

THE ENEMIES OF MOTIVATION
- **ill-adapted curricula (often copied from the primary school);**
- **lack of time;**
- **too few teachers;**
- **badly trained teachers;**
- **insufficient teaching materials;**
- **ostracism, shame and embarrassment;**
- **lack of child-care facilities.**

People are not made literate: they make themselves so when they have the right motivation and incentive

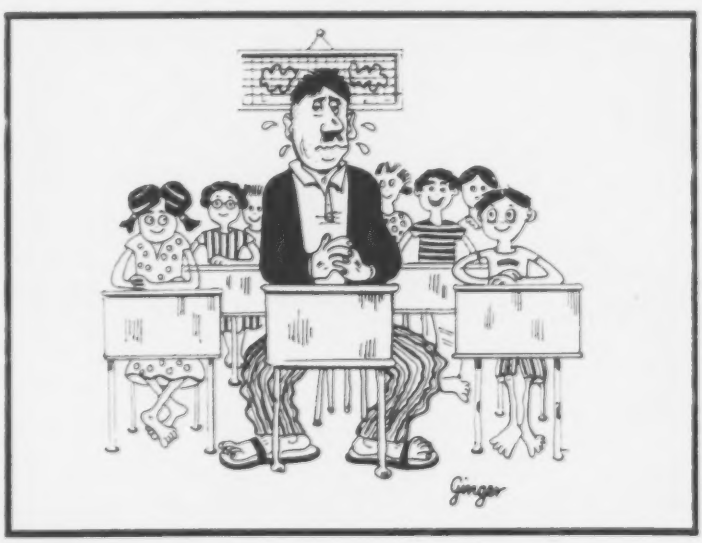
Director-General of UNESCO

Learning to read and write properly is a long, hard process, particularly for adults. Maintaining the drive and enthusiasm to learn new skills is difficult, particularly if the learner is also struggling with poor living conditions, and cannot see the advantages of literacy. Even where literacy courses for adults exist and succeed in enrolling a fair proportion of the illiterate population, a vast number of them drop out before completing the course - a further waste of effort and money.

Adults, particularly men, may have to overcome the psychological barrier of shame and anxiety before enrolling in literacy courses. In communities where embarrassment is a problem, it can be avoided through confidentiality and 'non-threatening' approaches, such as holding adult literacy classes in special adult education centres rather than in primary schools. This will give an air of respectability.

Women may have little free time after running the home and caring for the children. It may be even harder for them to attend. Providing child-care services and holding classes close to the home will make it easier for women to become literate.

Use non-threatening approaches



Learning to read and write in order to run a women's co-operative in Benin

Involving the community

Maintaining motivation is more difficult with adults than with children. (Children usually do not choose whether to attend school; adults do.) However motivation grows when students see the benefits of literacy, such as better results at work, more pay and a better standard of living. Motivation also improves when they see that literacy can benefit the family and the whole community. The elected representatives of the people at the local level, including those who run the village co-operative, are usually expected to be able to read and write.

Partners in the teaching process

Involving people in deciding what to do or what to learn also helps motivation. The resulting self-confidence among learners leads to more enthusiasm for self-education, and therefore a better standard of literacy.

In short, learners will benefit more from education when they are 'partners' rather than 'receivers' in the teaching process.

Combatting illiteracy is not merely a question of political decrees, nor of international agreements, nor of intensive activity carried out in the zeal of a fervent campaign. It can be partly these, but above all it should be a broad consensus. **VENEZUELA**

MEASURES TO CREATE MOTIVATION

- **Link literacy programmes to cultural events.**
- **Link literacy programmes to wage-earning activities.**
- **Link literacy programmes to social development and renewal, such as clean water, better roads and communications, an efficient fuel supply or public health services.**
- **Create special literacy centres.**
- **Involve people in the decision-making process.**
- **Award certificates of appreciation as a reward to those people or communities that have made an outstanding contribution to a literacy campaign.**
- **Offer social recognition or material reward to those who participate regularly in literacy classes.**

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Organizing and planning

Building schools, training teachers, publishing textbooks, providing school transport . . . the tasks are enormous. Sometimes a complete renewal of the education system may be required. How can the government make the best use of the educational infrastructures they already have? What can be done to improve them?

Before this process can even begin, each country must decide what kind of education it wants, and what it can afford. Literacy programmes must reflect the national way of life and the needs of the people. This means that government officials must involve local people in the decision-making process.

Using existing resources

Where cash is short, building new schools is an enormous drain on resources. For this reason, existing schools, colleges and universities can help by staying open for literacy classes outside their normal hours. Literacy teachers and helpers can also be recruited from among primary school-teachers, secondary and university students.

Educational administration

While the existing educational administration looks after schools and colleges, ideally a separate unit should deal with adult and non-formal education – including literacy classes. This unit can then ensure that the services of competent managers, planners, architects, teacher trainers, curriculum specialists and researchers are made available to these forms of education.

Staying in touch

Reliable information, in the form of a newsletter or magazine, keeps people working in various parts of the education system in touch with each other. Proper records of what has been achieved must be kept and can be taken into account for future planning. This is the role of official information, statistical and research services, supported by educational libraries. Research services are also essential in identifying what the learning needs of the people are, so that the education provided is relevant to their daily lives.

A complete renewal of the education system may be required.

The policy of universalizing education is confronted with the problem of enrolling the entire 7- to 14-year-old population in public schools. This means incorporating into the regular system those schools situated in remote rural areas or in the urban slums of large cities, and making sure that they provide the full eight grades foreseen at this level of education.
BRAZIL

An adult education section was set up in 1961. Since then, this service has undergone considerable growth. It is responsible for supervising adult literacy, functional literacy, post-literacy and rural development campaigns.
GABON

A PLAN OF ACTION

Literacy campaigns require planning and preparation both at the national and local levels. Vital considerations include:

- ***the objectives:*** **numbers of children or adults to be enrolled, the literacy rate to be achieved, the number of literacy centres to be set up, the number of teachers to be trained, etc.**
- **the *language(s)* to be used;**
- **how to mobilize *local support*;**
- **where the *financial resources* will come from;**
- **the *priority groups* to be reached;**
- **how *educational services* will grow and change over time;**
- **who will *manage* the campaign?**
- **where will the *teachers* come from?**
- **how will *salaries* be paid?**
- **how will *information* be shared?**
- **who will be responsible for *measuring progress?***
- **what is the *timetable?***

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Partnerships for literacy

The education ministry cannot, on its own, eradicate illiteracy. It must share the task with other national and local bodies. Ministries, such as agriculture, health, commerce or labour, may already have their own training programmes which can be adapted to the literacy campaign. In many countries, the justice department provides literacy courses in prisons.

Voluntary organizations, often known as non-governmental organizations or NGOs (see box), are vitally important. Religious groups, scouts and guides, women's and students' groups, agricultural co-operatives, trade unions and many others can all help. These groups are particularly effective because they are in close touch with local needs. They will often carry out work that is difficult for the ministry of education and they can accomplish a great deal for modest amounts of money. Sometimes they do not require any money at all, but simply public recognition and encouragement.

NGOs are vitally important. Here is a tiny sample.

The ministry of defence and the armed forces can help in many ways, such as organizing literacy courses for their own recruits or providing teachers from military personnel. They may also be able to offer transport to remote locations. In short, the ministry of defence should be represented on any national literacy council.

Laws or tax concessions can be used to encourage businesses to promote literacy. They should be encouraged to train their own illiterate staff outside normal working hours, or give them time off work to attend classes. Or they can sponsor literacy classes in the neighbourhood by, for example, paying for literacy materials.

USING UNIVERSITIES

Universities are sometimes unaware of how much they can contribute to literacy campaigns by:

- **providing literacy classes using students and staff;**
- **providing initial and in-service training for literacy teachers;**
- **designing programmes and courses;**
- **providing evaluation services;**
- **participating in the national literacy council.**

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS – NGOs

NGOs have a vital role to play in literacy campaigns by contributing *experience, energy, expertise* and *direct contact with the people.*

They can:

- **carry out censuses and evaluations;**
- **recruit qualified staff;**
- **give financial and material support;**
- **take the lead in running literacy centres and libraries;**
- **create teaching materials;**
- **find accommodation for teachers;**
- **motivate people to become involved.**

Meetings of parent-teacher councils constitute valuable occasions for promoting awareness of literacy eradication. **SAUDI ARABIA**

More primary and secondary schools, universities and other post-secondary educational institutions take part in literacy activities. **BULGARIA**

Literacy activities have been carried out for a number of years by several public and private institutions - unfortunately without any real co-ordinated structure. **BURUNDI**

The most important resource in moving towards national mobilization is social solidarity. **MEXICO**

... transport to remote locations.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A glossary of literacy terms

- *active approaches:* learning by doing and participating.
- *basic education:* education intended to meet basic learning needs.
- *basic learning needs:* the minimum knowledge and skills to live effectively in a society (literacy, numeracy, speech, moral values, social attitudes, etc.).
- *computer literacy:* the learned ability to operate computers effectively.
- *continuing education:* see *lifelong education.*
- *democratization of education:* the process of ensuring equality of educational opportunity at all levels.
- *disadvantaged groups:* people who, for one reason or another, do not benefit to the same degree as the majority of other people in their country from services provided by the government.
- *dropping out:* abandon of an educational programme before its completion.
- *distance education:* the use of educational technology (often in combination with the postal service) to provide instruction when it is difficult for learners and teachers to meet face to face.
- *educational technology:* the systematic use of modern means of communication (telephone, television, radio, computers, audio-visual media, as well as other items of 'hardware' and 'software') for instructional purposes.
- *formal education:* organized education taking place over a fixed period of time within established school premises and directed at specific objectives.
- *Fourth World:* a term used to describe the situation of those living in absolute poverty, wherever it may occur.
- *functional illiterates:* adults with inadequate literacy skills to meet the demands of everyday life.
- *functional literacy:* the level of literacy required to function effectively in a society.
- *human rights:* the full and unrestricted exercise of fundamental rights and freedoms to participate in the life of society, including the right to education.
- *informal education:* the erratic process of learning that goes on continuously and haphazardly for each individual outside organized formal and non-formal education.
- *integrated programmes:* achieving literacy skills while learning about another subject useful for the learners' well-being.
- *lifelong education:* the concept that education is a continuous process taking place throughout life.
- *literacy:* the ability to read and write with comprehension, as well as to make simple arithmetical calculations (numeracy).

- *literacy agent:* someone – trained or untrained, voluntary or paid – who facilitates literacy learning.
- *literate environment:* a community in which reading and writing are used currently in everyday life.
- *mother-tongue:* the first language spoken by children in their family environment.
- *neo-literate:* a person with recently acquired basic reading skills.
- *non-formal education:* any organized educational activity taking place outside formal education but directed at providing selected types of learning for particular sub-groups of the population.
- *out-of-school youth:* children and young people of school age who are not enrolled in school.
- *peer teaching:* one or more learners, having already mastered the lesson being taught, who provide instruction for a group of learners of the same age or same class.
- *post-literacy activities:* follow-up programmes intended to support and broaden reading and writing skills in newly-literate persons.
- *primary education:* initial schooling, usually lasting at least five years (it is generally assumed that five years of education are necessary to achieve self-sustaining literacy skills).
- *pre-primary education:* education preceding primary education, either organized by the government or on private initiative.
- *repetition:* repeating the same school grade.
- *relapse:* return to illiteracy for those who did not achieve self-sustaining literacy skills or had no opportunity of using them.
- *self-evaluation:* the technique of settings one's own learning objectives and recognizing when they have been achieved.
- *self-instruction:* the ability to conduct one's own learning when provided with adequate educational materials and support.
- *Third World:* basically, nowadays, developing countries. (In the 1950s, the world could be divided into the Communist World and the non-Communist World. The non-aligned nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America became the Third World. See also ***Fourth World***.)
- *two-track approach:* a policy requiring the provision of: (a) pre-primary and primary education for all children; and (b) non-formal education for adults and out-of-school youth.
- *universal primary education:* compulsory education for all children of primary school age.
- *vocational education:* training aimed at providing the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to carry out an occupation.
- *wastage:* the effects of the associated problems of repetition and dropping out.

A question of cost

To everything that has gone before – ignorance, disease, poverty, hunger, millions of children without schools and the inadequate resources for education in general – should be added the heavy burden of an irredeemable foreign debt, unfair terms of trade, protective customs barriers erected by industrialized countries, the low price of raw materials, the high price that must be paid for imported goods, and the general rate of inflation which has reached unprecedented levels.

Public will to eradicate illiteracy, however, can be measured, amongst other things, by the amount of money spent on education. Yet, according to UNICEF and UNDP (see page 30 for these names), some developing countries spend more on arms than on health and education combined (Figure 2).

Even where there is a real will to combat illiteracy, a lack of funds prevents progress. Many countries report that the shortage of money is the single most important obstacle to establishing universal primary education. Too little cash or irregular supplies of cash will also destroy a literacy campaign, whatever the motivating force behind it.

How can we increase levels of literacy with the available resources? How can more funding be provided and used in the best possible way? A straightforward increase in the educational budget can be achieved by a special tax on businesses and those families earning above-average incomes. A successful 'education tax' has been imposed in the Republic of Korea. Such measures may be abolished when a certain level of literacy has been reached.

Low-cost teaching

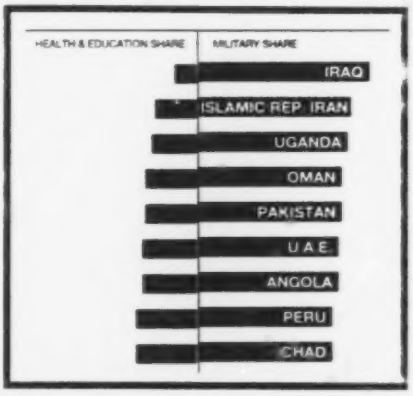
Alternatives to regular school can also cut costs. Non-formal education, in which students meet their teacher outside school hours and often outside traditional school buildings, can be very cost-effective for adults.

Multi-shift schools (see box) are another radical measure to enrol more children in school for less expense. Teaching takes place either in the morning or the afternoon, allowing two 'shifts' on the same day. Multi-grade classes and double-shift schools enabled Senegal to enrol 50,000 more pupils in 1988/89.

Sharing the cost

In the end, someone has to pay the bill – but it doesn't always have to be the government. Laws can oblige businesses to educate their workforce. In Australia, for example, businesses of a certain size are required to spend part of their budget on training, or else this amount is

FIGURE 2. The ratio of health and education to military spending in selected countries.



***Source:* UNDP. *Human development report, 1991.* p. 83.**

MULTI-SHIFT SCHOOLS
Special approaches are needed to make multi-shift schools work.

ADVANTAGES:
- **They make maximum use of limited resources and avoid overcrowding in the classroom.**
- **They make it possible to enrol more children without building new schools.**

DISADVANTAGES:
- **Parents and pupils need to be convinced that this system is not a second-class education system.**
- **The increased workload on teachers means that they must be paid extra or given other incentives.**
- **Different curricula are needed because the school day is shorter.**
- **Children do not learn as well in the afternoon as in the morning.**

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

deducted in tax. Alternatively, tax concessions can be offered to firms which support literacy activities.

Communities may be able - and willing - to build a school with their own hands, especially if the government can provide some incentive. In some cases, the Ministry of Education has agreed to pay the teacher's salary if the community will construct a school and provide accommodation for the teacher's family.

The armed forces can often help to cut costs by providing volunteer teachers from their educated personnel. They may teach in remote rural and mountainous areas which are difficult to reach by normal roads. The Ministry of Defence may even accept to pay for their transport and upkeep.

Many developing countries already receive foreign aid to finance education, particularly in the form of grants to purchase materials or to undertake pilot projects. In some small countries, as much as 30% of the education budget may regularly come from abroad. A list of aid agencies is included on page 30.

Commitment and imagination

Money isn't the only answer. One vital factor which doesn't cost anything is the political will to fight illiteracy. A UNESCO document written in 1985 states that: 'Political commitment and imagination - not money - are the most essential and effective resources against illiteracy'.

HOW TO CUT COSTS

Providing more education for more people will cost more money. But there are ways of keeping costs down:

- **set up alternatives to the regular school, such as non-formal education and multi-shift schools;**
- **use laws to make businesses contribute to education;**
- **encourage communities to build schools using cheap local materials and volunteer labour;**
- **use volunteer teachers;**
- **ask the armed forces to help in remote regions;**
- **literacy for migrants may be supported by their country of origin, particularly in the recruitment of teachers;**
- **involve local voluntary organizations in supporting literacy activities.**

Many forms of partnership have been created to help finance education: communities participate in the construction of schools; schools can be "adopted"; twinning agreements exist between national and foreign schools. **CAPE VERDE**

To which sector should we give priority? To agriculture? since well-fed children learn better. To health? since healthy children learn better. To education? since well-educated children contribute more to the development of other sectors. But in the meantime, one must satisfy one's hunger and maintain one's health. However carefully funds are allocated, with the present penury of means there are inevitably imbalances that may lead to the dispersion of effort, stagnation or, worse still, recession. **GUINEA**

TABLE 2. Regional human development comparisons, latest years.

	South Asia	East and South-East Asia	Latin America and the Caribbean	Arab States	Sub-Saharan Africa	Developing world	Industrial world
GNP per capita (US$)	390	530	1,830	1,820	470	710	12,510
Life expectancy (years)	58.4	68.1	67.4	62.1	51.8	62.8	74.5
Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000)	151	57	72	106	179	116	18
Maternal mortality rate (per100,000)	410	120	110	290	540	290	24
Adult literacy rate (%15+)	42	72	82	53	45	60	-
Scientists and technicians (per 1,000)	3.0	-	39.5	-	-	9.5	139.3
Annual population growth rate (1960-90)	2.3	2.0	2.4	2.7	2.8	2.3	0.8
Annual urban population growth rate (1960-90)	3.9	3.9	3.7	4.6	5.2	4.0	1.4
Military expenditure as % of spending on health and education	164	-	29	166	70	109	38
Population below the poverty line (%)	42	11	3	15	72	32	2
Female/male gap in literacy (M=100)	49	73	95	58	56	66	-
Rural/urban gap in access to safe water (U=100)	61	76	63	49	35	62	-

Red type indicates values worse than average.
Source:* UNDP. *Human development report, 1991. p. 29

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

What to teach and how to teach it

It cannot be stressed enough that adult illiterates need special books and teaching methods. They cannot be taught in the same way and using the same materials as children. Adults find children's books boring, irrelevant and demeaning – and they will quickly lose interest.

What children learn in school is often designed to give them access to the next higher level of the education system. What adults need is knowledge to solve the immediate problems of everyday life. The content of lessons must be relevant to their daily needs.

Integrated literacy programmes

Presenting literacy as part of everyday life means using subject matter from the world of work and from society in general. If literacy is linked to vocational education, adults can learn to read and write at the same time as learning a skill they can use to earn money. If literacy leads to self-reliance and self-employment, so much the better.

An important function of increased literacy is that people can play a more active role in changing society for the better. This means that subjects of broad general interest should also be included such as basic legal knowledge, local history and culture, health and hygiene. People can be taught how to improve their standard of living and play a role in the community. Nowadays, everyone should also learn about environmental protection, drug abuse and AIDS.

The right materials

At the initial level, reading primers, kits and guidelines for teachers are the main materials for most literacy programmes. They may cover literacy in the mother-tongue, numeracy, vocational skills and citizenship. Whatever their subject matter, they should be attractively presented and there should be enough of them. When there are no alternatives, teachers may have to teach adults using children's primary school books – with poor results because of the distinction between child and adult learning.

Adult literacy is plagued by shortages: no printing presses, no books, perhaps even no paper, no pencils, no radio and television studios, no transmitters. Very often, no radio and television receivers. Yet, children and adults need good quality materials if they are to remain motivated.

It is often difficult to get the literacy materials to where they are needed, especially in remote rural areas. It helps if materials have been prepared and distributed in advance. Decentralizing production to several regional centres is another way of tackling this problem.

...the immediate problems of everyday life

THE SUBJECT MATTER OF LITERACY PROGRAMMES

Lessons must be relevant to people's daily lives, but can still cover:

- ***health and hygiene*: nutrition, birth control, vaccinations and infant care, drug abuse and AIDS;**
- ***economics*: the world of work, personal finances, running a small business (even taxation!);**
- ***civic education*: basic legal knowledge, human rights, workers' rights, consumers' rights, social responsibilities, environmental protection, local history, geography, culture and crafts.**
- ***vocational training*: experts may be asked to provide instruction on: blacksmithing, car mechanics, carpentry, computers, cooking, building construction, crop management, dyeing, dairy farming, fish farming, forestry, knitting, nursing, pottery, poultry farming, soap making, soil and water conservation, traffic regulations and weaving. But adult education should not lose itself in work. The issue at stake is that of achieving a liberal education and broad practical skills of use in daily life.**

...the distinction between adult and child learning

Teaching methods

Most teaching still takes place in a classroom of some kind. Lessons can be made stimulating and lively by using active approaches, such as small group discussions, acting out real-life situations, and excursions. Peer teaching and self-instruction should also be encouraged. Because they provide variety, these methods increase the motivation and self-confidence of the learners. At the same time, they make them less dependent on the teacher. However, guided learning with written exercises and spoken questions and answers between the teacher and the learner are still the most common methods used. Thus, the role of the teacher remains vitally important.

LITERACY MATERIALS

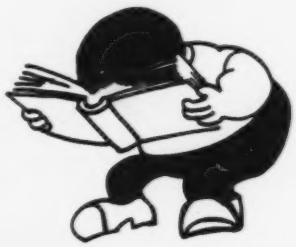
There are three broad categories:

1. *Printed media*: newspapers, wallcharts, posters, cards, flip-charts, books and textbooks, booklets, comics and magazines, correspondence courses, literature supplied by agricultural, commerce and health services.

2. *Electronic media*: radio, tape recorders, cassette players, television, video, slides and films.

3. *Folk media*: traditional tales, plays, proverbs, dances and songs.

Using materials from all three sources makes learning more interesting. Learners should also be encouraged to use libraries, to attend talks, theatres, mobile exhibitions and museums, and participate in sports and games.



THE IDEAL BOOK

The ideal book for new literates should have the following characteristics:

- **the subject matter should be relevant to national development and connected with the learning needs of the community;**
- **it should aim at achieving clear objectives;**
- **if it deals with a special subject, experts on that subject should be asked to comment;**
- **it should be well written and easy to read for new literates;**
- **the services of an illustrator and an editor should be used.**

MAKING MATERIALS RELEVANT

- **when national organizers plan literacy programmes, there should be room for matters of local interest;**
- **the learners themselves should be able to choose the learning materials and to help prepare lessons;**
- **care should be taken with the design of reading materials, both for adults and for children;**
- **all materials should be constantly evaluated and improved.**
- **the subject matter should reflect the learners' daily lives.**

Teacher's books, giving literacy agents basic guidelines for lessons, must also be prepared.

The role of the teacher remains vitally important.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Learning out of school

When, for whatever reason, children have not learned to read at school, non-formal education should be provided for them. As its name suggests, this means any kind of education outside formal education. It may or may not use the school buildings, staff and textbooks, but what makes it different is the timetable which is arranged so that adults and young people can attend – in the evening, or at quiet times of the agricultural year. Each country must devise non-formal programmes to suit its own particular needs, using innovative and flexible approaches. The aim should be to keep standards of learning as high as those in the formal school. This will also help students to rejoin the regular school system if they want to continue their education. Formal and non-formal education should exist side-by-side in *any* society. One without the other is insufficient to meet the learning needs of a modern society.

Distance education is another way of teaching outside the classroom and is often used for post-literacy programmes. People in remote rural areas can be reached by radio and television, periodicals and newspapers, particularly with the support of the postal service. Despite its name, this method is more successful if there is personal contact between the teacher and the learners from time to time.

Learning to read the modern way

Traditional literacy methods for young children teach the letters and sounds of the alphabet as the first step towards word building. Many modern teaching methods, particularly for adults, now take a different approach. They begin with whole words making whole phrases, particularly messages which will have a powerful emotional effect on the learner. These carefully chosen phrases may concern topical matters in local life or political slogans. Once these messages have been learned and the learner's interest aroused, they are broken down into words to make new phrases. Only later will the words be broken down into letters to make new words.

Once children and adults have learned to read, they can go on to the next stage – reading in order to learn.

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Compared to 'paper' materials, modern educational technology is expensive, but it is becoming cheaper all the time. It is also stimulating and adds variety, but teachers must be trained in its use. Examples include:

- **specially designed radio and television programmes**
- **recordings, correspondence courses, video and special newspapers;**
- **the telephone can be used for personal contacts in distance education;**
- **computers are powerful tools, especially for self-instruction, but are still very expensive. Dramatic changes in the use of computers for literacy learning can be expected in the coming years.**

educational technology ... is becoming cheaper all the time

The Literacy and Numeracy Section conducts its training through a method called the 'Learning Post Programme'. A 'Learning Post' is a collection of illiterates, mainly herdboys, and some literate learners who are assisted by voluntary helpers in their studies. The literacy teaching technique is each-one-teach-one. **LESOTHO**

The Ministry of Education plans to establish a Textbook Publishing and Printing Unit which will work in collaboration with the already existing Uganda Literature Bureau. The unit will, as a priority, print core subject textbooks. **UGANDA**

The strategy used is to motivate and mobilize any educated person as a tutor or monitor. Every educated person is supposed to carry out the self-multiplication process using the chain-reaction system with a geometric progression: 'each one teach ten'. **INDONESIA**

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Questions of culture and language

In what language should a person learn to read and write? It's not a simple question to answer. In some African and Asian countries, there may be dozens, even hundreds, of languages in current use. It's clearly not practical to try to teach in all of them. The main issue is: do we teach in the mother-tongue of the local people or in a more widely used language? In some cases, another language means a 'foreign' language.

Mother-tongue teaching

Language research suggests that children learn more quickly in the mother-tongue, at least during the first few years of primary school. Mother-tongue teaching strengthens cultural identity and makes it easier to find teachers locally. However, there are disadvantages too. Small linguistic groups can become isolated and shut into a kind of linguistic ghetto. Many languages still do not possess a system of writing. Even where they have been written down, there may be very few books or printed materials to use in teaching.

Volunteers using the mother-tongue to teach literacy may not be familiar with modern language techniques. If they resort to the rigid academic approaches they learned as children, then the quality of teaching will suffer.

Using another language

Using a common language as the medium of literacy has the advantage that there may be a plentiful supply of teachers and reading materials. Adults are more able to cope with learning to read in a second language and may be highly motivated to do so for political or financial reasons.

However, there is no doubt that, if not handled with care, the language issue leads to bitter arguments and antagonism between different social groups. It touches on questions of national unity, political rights and access to employment. Scientific research proving that it is easier to read in one language rather than another can easily be manipulated by one political faction or another to support its claims. For these reasons, in a multi-lingual society, it is useful to define by law the official status of each language so that both learners and policy-makers know where they stand. Some countries have set up a special institute to look after the language issue.

Because of the huge diversity of languages, many nations have to struggle with this difficult dilemma – there's no secret formula or 'right' solution. One common language is not necessarily equivalent to nationhood, while linguistic diversity may be considered as part of a nation's wealth.

MULTILINGUALISM

Countries with many languages have to choose between two extremes:

- **teaching in *all languages*, which is ideal but financially and practically impossible;**
- **teaching in *one main language* – sometimes a foreign one. This can lead to a national identity, but is also liable to promote rivalry between different social groups.**

The problem resides in the existence of more than thirty languages which have no orthography. Instruction is conducted in eight languages. **UGANDA**

Experience has shown that it is very difficult to carry out literacy programmes in the official language when it is not the mother-tongue of the adult learners. **MOZAMBIQUE**

The present education system completely ignores our cultural heritage. **GABON**

Another significant innovation is the move to improve the plight of the previously neglected Indians. They now benefit from a bilingual system which foresees the use of both Spanish and their native language (there are eight other languages in all). It encourages the preservation of their traditions, cultures and mother-tongues. **ECUADOR**

Under an agreement with the Ministry of Education of Peru, Bolivia will use thirty educational texts written in Ayamara and Quechua, the main languages of the native population in the two countries. **BOLIVIA**

Experiments with national languages have had a favourable effect on dropping out (and therefore on costs) in the first cycle of basic education. Children are more involved in school activities and have better understanding. **MALI**

THE IDEAL LANGUAGE

Whatever language is used for literacy, it should have some or all of the following characteristics:

- **it should be familiar to and preferred by learners and their teachers;**
- **it should be spoken by a large number of people over a large area;**
- **it should be useful for communication in local and national life, and especially in working life;**
- **it should be well supplied with teaching materials;**
- **it should be provided with enough printed texts to prevent newly literate people from forgetting what they have learned.**

Teaching the teachers

In any attempt to improve education the teacher is the key. It is through the teacher that all the efforts of policy makers, administrators and campaign organizers are channelled to the object of the exercise – the learners themselves.

Primary school-teachers

Primary school-teachers lay the foundations for the next generation of literate adults. Yet, many countries complain of shortages of qualified primary and secondary teachers. It may, for instance, be difficult to recruit enough educated people because they can earn more money working elsewhere in the economy. But training more teachers, both men and women, is one of the main ways of providing high quality education for the whole population.

Teaching adults

The people who teach adults come from three main groups. They may be primary or secondary school-teachers with a university degree and/or teaching diploma behind them. They may be teachers who have received special training in the teaching of adults. Or, finally, they may be volunteers (see box). Volunteers usually have a good standard of education, but may not have had any training or experience as teachers.

In the long run, teachers with special training in the teaching of adults are the best people to carry out adult literacy courses but, for short-term campaigns, volunteers are an excellent way of bringing in extra manpower and enthusiasm. Indeed, those countries that have wiped out illiteracy in a short period during this century have used volunteer teachers.

Whatever their background, literacy teachers need training if they are to teach adults successfully. Teaching adults is very different from teaching children. Adults have widely varying backgrounds, experience and expectations. Teachers must be aware of this. They must establish good relations in an atmosphere of trust, avoiding any temptation to use authority. They must advise adult learners on their strengths and weaknesses, and guide them in their choice of learning materials.

The teacher may also find that he/she is expected to be a community training officer or form part of the village development team. He/she may even be expected to play the role of social adviser, because literacy changes people's image of themselves and their abilities.

All this calls for adult education teachers with dedication, wide-ranging knowledge and skills, and the

The government mobilizes primary and secondary school-teachers in rural areas, as well as students in senior grades, to conduct literacy campaigns. CHINA

MOTIVATING LITERACY TEACHERS

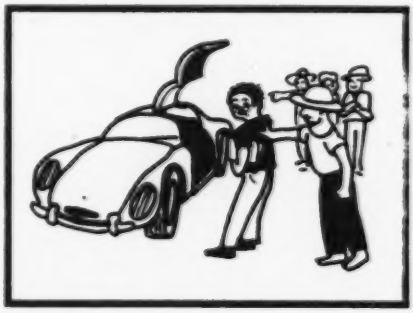
The purpose of incentives is to keep qualified and motivated men and women in the public service. Motivating literacy teachers is as important as motivating the learners themselves. There are many ways of encouraging literacy teachers:

- **Teachers and their representatives should feel that they benefit from political support by being consulted by the educational authorities on national policies.**
- **They should participate in local decision-making bodies.**
- **Their competence should be recognized by national certification.**
- **They should benefit from regular in-service education.**
- **Their work should receive public acknowledgement by the local community, such as certificates of gratitude awarded during special ceremonies, or naming streets after deserving educators, etc.**
- **They should be provided with adequate teaching materials.**
- **Professional mobility should be encouraged, such as those in difficult posts being short-listed for promotion and transfer.**
- **Modest cash incentives.**

Access to other privileges and benefits may be available, such as housing loans, tax concessions, study grants for children, subsidized food or transport, or receiving preferential treatment in recruitment to civil service posts.

Apart from gifts from villagers, literacy volunteers may receive incentives in the form of watches, clothes, tools or a bicycle from the literacy campaign organizers.

Whatever extra incentives are offered, teachers must, of course, be paid. There are teachers who do not receive enough salary to live on and, after fulfilling their minimal teaching duties, are forced to take up another job to survive. Some literacy volunteers receive no material or financial reward at all, and it may be difficult to maintain their enthusiasm. In the long term, the success of the literacy programme will be the principal victim.



Literacy volunteers may receive other incentives ...

Teachers must, of course, be paid.

Various strategies have been used to recruit literacy teachers who could be, other than experienced teachers, any adults or young people who have completed secondary education and are willing to become involved in the programme. University students will be recruited, mainly those in national universities, through such incentives as: including work as a literacy agent in graduation requirements; awarding points in competitions for public appointments for the work accomplished. **BRAZIL**

'Minds across' is designed to encourage teachers to develop their own skills in reading, drawing and writing. It is also meant to build confidence among them as innovators of ideas and as capable communicators. **UGANDA**

USING VOLUNTEERS
Volunteer teachers and organizers can be very useful, particularly in short-term literacy campaigns. They can be recruited from among school-teachers, trainee teachers, secondary and university students, religious leaders, military personnel, retired civil servants and any educated people with time to spare.

ADVANTAGES:
- **They can bring great enthusiasm and vigour to the job.**
- **They may have much in common with the people they teach.**
- **They make scarce resources go a long way.**

DISADVANTAGES:
- **They may not have any experience of teaching.**
- **They may not be familiar with modern teaching techniques and try to use the methods they remember from childhood – with poor results.**
- **They cannot make a long-term commitment to teaching literacy.**

ability to analyse problems and take action. Evidently, it is a very different role from that of the primary school-teacher. Few primary teachers receive instruction in adult education methods or social psychology during their initial training, though this would certainly be an advantage for those who may become involved in literacy programmes at some stage of their careers.

... form part of the village development team.

Unquestionably, the role of adult educator is not a simple one. For this reason alone, the salary of experienced adult educators should at least be equivalent to that of primary and secondary school-teachers in the formal system.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The right training

Good initial and in-service training are essential for all types of teachers. Volunteers, especially should be given some introductory training, since they may not have any previous teaching experience. This will help to maintain their goodwill and enthusiasm.

As well as teachers, other literacy personnel and educational administrators need training in the curriculum and teaching methods, planning and management, research and evaluation. Publishing guidance manuals for adult literacy teachers has proved extremely useful in some countries. Head teachers and school inspectors will also benefit from training in running schools and organizing literacy courses.

In practice, the training most literacy personnel receive is often inadequate, varying from none at all to short courses. Where courses are available, they take the form of intensive seminars and workshops on the development and use of literacy materials. They may last from a few hours to a few days, and may be supplemented by continuing education in the form of evening classes, lectures, demonstrations and visits.

Annual residential refresher courses lasting two to five days during school holidays are beginning to be found all over the world to maintain skills and enthusiasm. Distance education is particularly useful for the in-service training of teachers.

RESOURCE CENTRES

Educational libraries and resource centres enrich the work of both trainee and practising teachers:

- **they provide material for lessons;**
- **they contain information on local conditions so that teachers can adapt their lessons accordingly;**
- **they provide links between universities, teacher trainers and literacy teachers.**

The Korean Association of Adult Education hosts diverse symposiums and workshops for the re-education and in-service education of literacy personnel. In addition, non-formal education institutes deliver retraining courses for literacy personnel once a year. **REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

IMPROVING TEACHER TRAINING

The training of primary and secondary school-teachers is crucial. The quality of teacher training throughout the world is improving thanks to:

- **better initial training;**
- **regular in-service training;**
- **distance education courses;**
- **holiday courses;**
- **schemes to train the educated unemployed as literacy volunteers;**
- **improving the quality of teacher trainers and those teachers that supervise on-the-job training.**

Zaire envisages setting up a new speciality in teacher training schools, that of adult educator. **ZAIRE**

THE IDEAL TEACHER

- **the teacher should come from the same social background as the learners;**
- **the teacher and the learners should feel at ease with each other, e.g. in some cultures, women should teach women, men teach men;**
- **the teacher should lead and advise, rather than imposing his or her authority on the learners;**
- **the teacher should alternate periods of teaching with periods of practical activity (writing, speaking, listening) or games.**

We have considerably reduced the percentage of poorly qualified or unqualified teachers in primary and secondary schools. At the same time, we have concentrated our efforts on strengthening teacher training schools and institutes, which are the key to the education of the future generation. It should be said that only the best students are selected for entry to them. **DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

The teacher and the learners should feel at ease with each other

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Literacy and after

The National Library Service is operating rural community information centres which provide reading materials for new-literates and other members of the community. Over 300 such centres have been established. **MALAWI**

A series of post-literacy measures has been adopted designed to consolidate the skills of new-literates and to facilitate their involvement in the work market: the creation of reading and cultural centres in rural areas; the search for ways of financing publications in national languages; the setting up of popular libraries across the country. **RWANDA**

There is still a risk of people relapsing into illiteracy through lack of opportunity to read and write. For this reason, thirty-seven new public libraries will be opened during 1991. By the year 2000, Thailand will have a public library in every district. At the village level, 30,197 reading centres already exist. **THAILAND**

To prevent new-literates from relapsing into illiteracy, a post-literacy campaign has been launched whereby students and teachers meet to continue their education. **ECUADOR**

Education for living in the technological society that is emerging in the twenty-first century demands much more than basic literacy. It requires not only language skills in the mother-tongue as well as international languages and technological skills, but also a total education comprising social, cultural and civic knowledge, attitudes and skills that are germane to the moulding of a human personality. **SRI LANKA**

There must be a supporting environment which permits the use of new human capacities. It is not only intellectually satisfying that new skills can be shown to contribute to development; it is also a matter of individual satisfaction that time devoted to participation in the acquisition of a new culture should be shown to be rewarding. **ETHIOPIA**

CONSOLIDATING SKILLS

People who have just learned to read need plenty of practice at the right level for their skills. Reading material is available from many sources:

- **governments and many international and voluntary organizations publish free books and magazines for neo-literates (see page 30).**
- **small rural printing presses publish material in local languages;**
- **national and local newspapers publish an easy-reading column;**
- **neo-literates set up their own reading clubs;**
- **local radio and television stations transmit special programmes for village reading clubs;**
- **correspondence courses;**
- **literacy teachers hold regular follow-up meetings with former students;**
- **village libraries are created in schools and community centres;**
- **local festivals, sporting events, exhibitions and fairs all generate literacy materials.**

Many of those who complete literacy courses forget what they have learned simply because they have nothing to read and no reason to write. People who have just learned to read need plenty of interesting and useful reading materials, but it's hard to move from simplified classroom manuals to the sophistication of normal books and magazines. Many organizations throughout the world have tackled this problem by creating specially written, relevant but easy-to-read and attractive books and magazines to help the neo-literate consolidate their skills. Where they exist, rural printing presses cater for this group by publishing texts in the local language. Easy-reading columns can also be found in national and local newspapers, sometimes publishing writing by the neo-literates themselves.

To help make the transition from literacy lessons to post-literacy activities as part of everyday life, students will benefit from follow-up meetings with their former teacher. Or they can be encouraged to set up their own reading clubs and libraries where they can practise their skills and enjoy the company of other literate persons. Radio and television programmes can provide a stimulus for these meetings. Mobile libraries can bring reading materials to scattered populations. This kind of literate environment is essential if students are not to relapse into illiteracy again. They should understand that lifelong education can continue through self-instruction.

Once people have learned to read and write, a logical step is to use these skills to obtain training in a trade or craft leading to employment. But literacy is not just about earning money. Through literacy, people can learn to take decisions about themselves and the community, about power and responsibility, and about changing their way of life. Autonomy is the very purpose of literacy.

Clearly, follow-up to literacy is just as important as the process of learning to read itself. In practice, it is often overlooked. All too often, governments show little interest in adult education and none at all in post-literacy activities. When funds have been allocated for post-literacy activities, they may be the first to be cut in a budgetary crisis. Money must be set aside in the central educational funds to finance these activities. If economy measures are then called for, post-literacy should only contribute to the extent of its proportion of the educational budget. If learners are not helped to use their skills, the efforts to teach them will be wasted.

Evaluation and research

Checking the progress of learners and monitoring the success or failure of literacy programmes are now considered essential to their smooth running and to the efficient use of money.

Primary schoolchildren

Nowadays, experts believe that pupils in primary education should be assessed continuously. This means that frequent internal tests should be given by the classroom teacher rather than external examinations organized annually by the educational authorities. Through continuous evaluation of the whole class the teacher finds out rapidly which children are not keeping up with the rest and which lessons were not understood.

The purpose of testing is to avoid pupils repeating the same class – often a prelude to failure and dropping out. Teachers must be shown the value of these techniques and how to apply them during their initial or in-service training. Of course, even evaluation methods themselves will require review from time to time.

...pupils in primary education should be assessed continuously

EXAMINATIONS AND CERTIFICATES

When senior officials have passed formal examinations, they may not be able to imagine any other kind of evaluation. The danger is that 'one learns for the sake of the diploma'.

While regular tests are useful, some educators now think that exams – particularly those on a national level where one might 'fail' – should be avoided if at all possible.

An alternative is continuous evaluation: a series of informal tests where each school or teacher measures literacy progress in learners.

But surely, national examinations are essential, aren't they?

Yes. Formal exams administered by the central educational authorities are necessary when a certificate is required to pass to a higher level of education or to enter a job where a qualification is required. In these cases, each student could ask to sit the examination on a voluntary basis.

However, those who do not sit the national exam should be rewarded by a certificate of participation when they complete primary education or an adult literacy course. There may not necessarily be a formal exam for this certificate, but it may give the possessor access to certain privileges.

...one learns for the sake of the diploma.

We provide a wide range of testing and measurement tools for the teacher in reading, reading comprehension and arithmetic. **ISRAEL**

Venezuela has just introduced an Education for Work Programme one of the characteristics of which is constant feedback between industry, business and the education so as to create a steady flow of information and services designed to enable educational activity to adjust itself to society's on-going needs for trained manpower. **VENEZUELA**

The process of evaluation will continue through an assessment of curricula and teaching methods, through a critical analysis of pre-service and in-service primary teacher training, and an analysis of how the young primary school-leaver can be integrated into the living environment. **BURUNDI**

Adult learners

The matter of evaluating the performance of adults has to be approached with great caution. Experience suggest that any form of disapproval shown towards adult learners tends to discourage them so that they drop out of literacy courses. This can pose a problem since society and employers expect a certain standard of literacy to be reached. So how can a satisfactory level of literacy be reached if you cannot criticize adults? It is now believed that, if the learning objectives have been clearly agreed at each stage of a literacy course by both the learner and teacher, adults are capable themselves of noting their progress and of putting right their shortcomings.

Thus, informal self-evaluation is particularly appropriate for adults and is a good way of involving them in their own learning.

Evaluation of literacy programmes

It is essential that we provide better literacy programmes for learners, better textbooks, better materials and better management. But to speed up the process of achieving literacy, educational administrators also require information on the way the system works now so as to identify successes, problems and failures. Some tough decisions may have to be taken.

Not enough is known about the impact of literacy programmes, particularly on adults. This is an area where, even today, there is not much solid evidence to support decision taking. All too often literacy programmes are undertaken in a hurry. Information on how to go about them is neglected and past experience ignored. Action may be taken on the basis of statistical data, while ignoring the learners' real needs, their readiness to learn or their actual progress.

Evaluation services need to examine information to find out which factors promote success or lead to failure, and pass on the information to campaign planners. They need to know early on whether the campaign is on the right road so that they can quickly make any changes.

RESEARCH

Nearly every country accepts that literacy research is important for the success of programmes. Among the many different institutions conducting this research throughout the world, we can mention the following:

- **the educational research institute of a university;**
- **a department of the ministry of education;**
- **another governmental department, such as that responsible for employment;**
- **the national commission for literacy.**
- **a non-governmental organization working in the field of literacy, adult education, curriculum development or local languages;**
- **a teacher training institution.**

The matter of evaluating the performance of adults has to be approached with great caution.

EVALUATING MANAGEMENT

The following administrative aspects of a literacy programme need to be constantly checked:

- **The administrative structure itself;**
- **The use of money;**
- **The use of staff;**
- **The use of time;**
- **The size of classes;**
- **The need to expand the programme;**
- **The relationship between the literacy programme and the regular school system;**
- **The number of learners completing the course compared to those who started.**

There is an exchange of experience among the sectors participating actively in the literacy campaign to check progress in local literacy groups.
ECUADOR

A diagnostic evaluation at the beginning of the process allows us to establish the initial knowledge; another evaluation is undertaken in the middle of the process; then a final evaluation lets us know what level the new literate has achieved. **MEXICO**

Where to go for help

All this points to the need for greater solidarity among Member States and the fostering of more committed alliances at all levels against the scourge of illiteracy. KENYA

UNESCO'S ROLE

UNESCO is not a funding agency. It plays an intermediary role in creating educational policies, plans, research and content. To do this it organizes meetings, seminars and workshops, and it can also provide limited human, material and financial resources.

One of its most important activities in favour of literacy is its initiative in setting up four regional programmes for the eradication of illiteracy. It also runs a number of international and regional networks for educational research, innovation and development.

Despite the best intentions, there is a danger that the limited nature of UNESCO's activity in some countries is not enough. Without proper follow-up, programmes become 'isolated efforts' leading nowhere. It is only with the active support of its Member States that, throughout the 1990s, UNESCO can continue its action to achieve literacy and basic education for all. Collective effort is needed.

- The *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* (UNESCO), 7, place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris, France.
- *International Institute for Educational Planning* (IIEP) maintains a research network consisting of its former trainees: IIEP, 7-9, rue Eugène-Delacroix, 75016 Paris, France.
- *International Bureau of Education* (IBE) organizes a network of educational documentation centres: International Network for Educational Information (INED), IBE, P.O. Box 199, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.
- *UNESCO Institute for Education* (UIE) carries out studies in the field of literacy, non-formal and lifelong education: UIE, 58 Feldbrunnenstrasse, Postfach 132153, D-2000 Hamburg 13, Germany.

Furthermore, UNESCO has established four regional programmes against illiteracy:

- *Major Project in the Field of Education in Latin America and the Caribbean.* UNESCO OREALC, Enrique Delpiano 2058, Casilla 3187, Santiago de Chile.
- *Regional Programme for the Eradication of Illiteracy in Africa.* UNESCO BREDA, B.P. 3311, Dakar, Senegal.
- *Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL).* UNESCO PROAP, 920 Sukhumvit Road, G.P.O. Box 1425, Bangkok 10501, Thailand.
- *Regional Programme for the Universalization and Renewal of Primary Education and the Eradication of Illiteracy in the Arab States by the Year 2000 (ARABUPEAL).* UNESCO UNEDBAS, Al-Shmaisani, P.O. Box 2270, Wadi Saqra, Amman, Jordan.SS

International, regional, sub-regional and bilateral co-operation are important to attain the goal of a literate world.

Several organizations of the United Nations System are concerned with education in developing countries:

- *United Nations Children's Fund* (UNICEF), United Nations, New York, NY 10017, United States of America.
- *United Nations Development Programme* (UNDP), United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, United States of America.
- *The United Nations Population Fund* (UNFPA), 220 E. 42nd Street, 19th floor, New York, NY 10017, United States of America.
- *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (UNHCR), Case postale 2500 Dépôt, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland.
- *United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East* (UNRWA), Vienna International Centre, P.O. Box 700, 1400 Vienna, Austria.
- *The World Bank*, 1818 H Street NW, Washington, DC 20433, United States of America.
- *The World Health Organization* (WHO), 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland.

Other regional organizations involved in the development of literacy and basic education include:

- *African Association for Literacy and Adult Education* (AALAE), Loita Street, Finance House, P.O. Box 50768, Nairobi, Kenya.
- *Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States* (ABEGS), P.O. Box 3908, Riyadh 11481, Saudi Arabia.
- *Arab Literacy and Adult Education Organization* (ARLO), 113 Abu Nawas Street, P.O. Box 3217, Al Saadoon, Baghdad, Iraq.
- *Asia Pacific Programme of Education for All* (APPEAL), c/o UNESCO/PROAP, Box 967, Prakanong Office, Bangkok 10110, Thailand.
- *Asia-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education* (ASPBAE), c/o Centre for Continuing Education, Australian National University, P.O. Box 1225, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia.
- *The Commonwealth Secretariat*, Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HX, United Kingdom.
- *Conference of Ministers of Education of French-speaking Countries* (CONFEMEN), B.P. 3220, Immeuble Kébé, Extension 3e étage, 26, rue Huart, Dakar, Senegal.
- *Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* (ISESCO), 16bis, Charia Omar Ben Khattab, B.P. 755, Agdal - Rabat, Morocco.
- *Latin American Council for Adult Education* (CEAAL), Diagonal Orient 1604, Casilla 6257, Correo 22, Santiago, Chile.
- *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development* (OECD), 2, rue André-Pascal, 75775 Paris Cédex 16, France.
- *Regional Centre for Adult Education and Functional Literacy for Latin America* (CREFAL), Patzcuaro, Michoacan, Mexico DF, Mexico.
- *Regional Centre for Functional Literacy in Rural Areas for the Arab States* (ASFEC), Sirs-el-Layyan, Menoufia, Egypt.

Certain bilateral development agencies are ready to share their accumulated experience:

- *Canadian International Development Agency* (CIDA), Place du Centre, 200, Promenade du Portage, Hull, Quebec K1A 0G4, Canada.
- *Danish International Development Agency*, Asiatisk Plads 2, 1448 Copenhagen K, Denmark.
- *German Foundation for International Development* (DSE), Rauchstrasse 25, Postfach 3210, 1000 Berlin 30, Germany.
- *Inter-American Foundation*, 1515 Wilson Boulevard, Rosslyn, VA 22209, United States of America.
- *Swedish International Development Authority* (SIDA), 105 25 Stockholm, Sweden.
- *United States Agency for International Development* (USAID), Washington, DC 20523, United States of America.

In addition, numerous non-governmental organizations provide information and support. For instance:

- *Asian Cultural Centre for Unesco* (ACCU), No. 6 Fukuromachi, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 162, Japan.
- *Bernard Van Leer Foundation*, P.O Box 82334, 2508 EH The Hague, Netherlands.
- *Centre for the Study of Education in Developing Countries* (CESO), c/o Badhuisweg 251, P.O. Box 90734, 2509 LS The Hague.
- *International Development Research Centre* (IDRC), P.O. Box 8500, Ottawa, Ontario K1G 3H9, Canada.
- *International Council for Adult Education* (ICAE), 720 Bathurst Street, Suite 500, Toronto, Ontario, M5R 2R4, Canada.

International co-operation and aid

There is no shortage of ideas and enthusiasm to tackle the vast problem of illiteracy. Many developing countries benefit simply from the exchange of experience with other countries. This means making information available about successful literacy programmes in different countries – in particular experiences with languages of instruction, how to reach people in remote areas and how to satisfy the basic learning needs of different groups.

By exchanging information and experience, by bringing together expertise, by sharing facilities and undertaking joint activities, several neighbouring countries can help each other. But the true spirit of partnership does not mean transferring models from one country to another. For long-term success, each nation must identify its own basic learning needs and then turn to its own people to find the means to satisfy them.

Meeting basic learning needs constitutes a common and universal human responsibility. It requires international solidarity and equitable and fair economic relations in order to redress existing economic disparities. All nations have valuable knowledge and experiences to share for designing effective educational policies and programmes. But for many developing countries the scale of the problem is so enormous that huge amounts of money and effort will have to be found if we have any hope of eradicating illiteracy by the year 2000. Countries providing aid have done much, but they must do more. At the Geneva Conference on literacy, the Swedish delegate remarked about aid contributions that: 'So far, only the Netherlands and the Nordic countries have achieved the 0.7 per cent of gross national product set up by the United Nations.'

International co-operation, financial aid and expertise are particularly useful in launching new national projects, especially at the planning stage. The international community can also mobilize world public support through such events as the annual International Literacy Day – 8 September.

During the last decade of the twentieth century, let us work hard to reach the aim of a literate world. There is no time to be lost.

If, after this conference is over, all of us here do not do the self-multiplication process, then we will all belong to the 'nato' group - this has nothing to do with NATO, the defence alliance - nato here means 'no action, talk only'. I am convinced, however, that every one of us here is an action man, so let us move hand-in-hand to help children, youth and adults towards the future - towards the literate world.

INDONESIA

SOURCES

International Conference on Education, 42nd session, Geneva, 3-8 September 1990. Final report. **Paris, UNESCO:International Bureau of Education, 1991.**

Giere, U.; Ouane, A.; Ranaweera, A.H. **Literacy in developing countries: an analytical bibliography. *Bulletin of the International Bureau of Education*** **(Paris, UNESCO), no. 254-257, 1990.**

Rassekh, S. Perspectives on literacy: a selected world bibliography. **Paris, UNESCO, 1991.**

Tanguiane, S. **Literacy and illiteracy in the world: situation, trends and prospects. *International yearbook of education*** **(Paris, UNESCO), vol. XLII, 1990.**

UNDP. Human development report, 1991. **New York, UNDP, 1991.**

UNESCO. Basic education and literacy: world statistical indicators. **Paris, UNESCO, 1990. (ST-90/WS-1)**

UNESCO. Compendium of statistics on illiteracy - 1990 edition. **Paris, UNESCO, 1990. (Statistical reports and studies, no. 31)**

UNESCO. World education report, 1991. **Paris, UNESCO, 1991.**

Wagner, D.A. **Literacy: developing the future. *International yearbook of education*** **(Paris, UNESCO), vol. XLIII, 1991.**

World Conference on Education for All, Jomtien, Thailand, 5-9 March 1990. Final report. **New York, Inter-Agency Commission for WCEFA, 1990. (Now available from UNESCO)**

Back cover: A first-year economics student from Rangoon University teaching a night literacy class for women.

Illustrations:

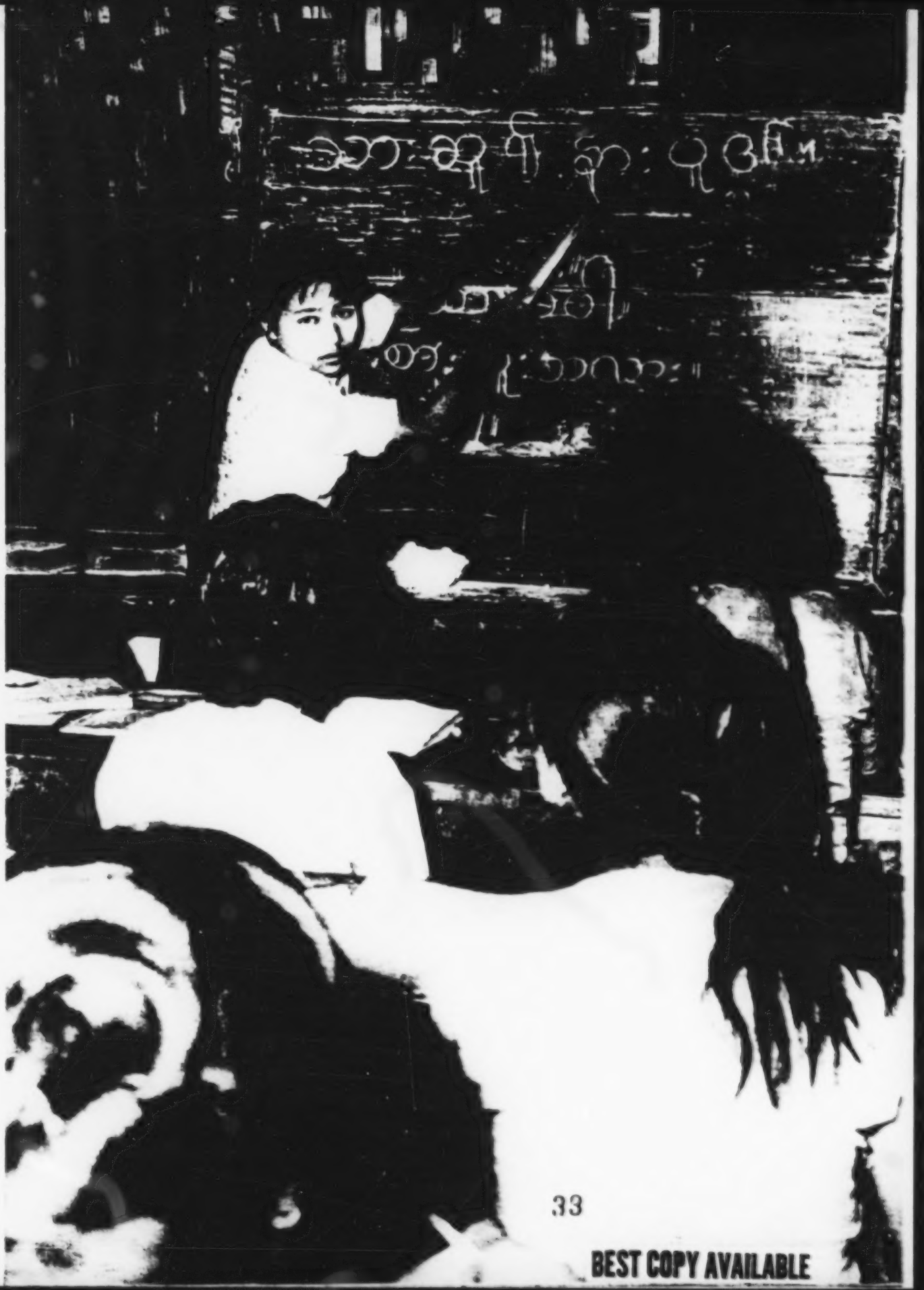
Pages 3 (F. Botts), 13 (T. Fenyes), 21 (Bancun/Caracciolo), 25 (I. Veiez), 29 (A. Conti) and 32 (Mallica) by FAO, Rome.

Pages 6 (M. Claude) and 7 (D. Roger) by UNESCO, Paris.

Cartoons on pages 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 14, 18, 20, 25, 26, 28 and 29 by Ginger.

Drawings on pages 2, 9, 11, 15, 21, 22, 24, 29 and 31 by Fox.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



BEST COPY AVAILABLE